

**Steps
to
Christian Maturity
Vol. 2**

By Fredrick G. Omondi

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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INTRODUCTION

This book on Christian Maturity is a sequel to my first volume and which touched on the major factors that may lead one to be a mature Christian.

In the first volume I majorly dealt on first looking at a glance on Christian maturity followed by the following: the importance of Christian maturity and the various factors that facilitates it.

In this volume however I have endeavored to dwell on other factors that also serve the same purpose of bringing a Christian to the level of maturity and also give a concluding remark as well.

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Chapter 1	6
The word Factor	
Chapter 2	15
The Obedience Factor	
Chapter 3	78
The Prayer and Fasting factor	
Chapter 4	102
The Meekness Factor	
Chapter 5	113
The Fellowship Factor	
Chapter 6	122
The Perseverance Factor	
Chapter 7	156
In conclusion	

Chapter 1

The word Factor

In the foregoing chapters in the first volume I dealt on many factors that can assist a Christian in growing in the faith and coming to maturity.

Those factors are listed in an epistle of Apostle Peter to the Church. But in my own opinion going by what the Scripture say I do find that there are other equally important factors as well which I believe you will agree with me that it is so and which I do now present to you beginning with the word of God.

From the onset we do know that Jesus Christ is the Word of God and also that it is God's word that brings salvation to the one who believes in it.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 1:1-4

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

Revelation 19:11-13

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:15-16

Therefore there is great need for one to hold to God's word that one has received.

And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouceable in his sight:

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; wherein I Paul am made a minister;

Colossians 1:21-23

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Colossians 2: 6-8

Now we have to be full of the word of God to grow and mature in Christ Jesus as the word of God is spiritual food.

As new babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

1 Peter 2: 2

But how do we get this milk to grow up in?

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Apart from individual effort in studying the word of God there is need to search the scriptures to confirm or otherwise what you hear being preached and taught and also to take time and fellowship with the brethren.

And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Acts 17: 10-11

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in the heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying,

Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Then they which gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2: 36-42

And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry,
for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the
knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the
measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro,
and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the
sleight men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in
wait to deceive;

Ephesians 4:11-14

Jesus Christ told his disciples to be wise. But one cannot be
wise without having the word of God which is actually the
wisdom one needs in life.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be
ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

Matthew 10: 16

The psalmist admits that God's word had made him wiser
than his enemies for he had it with him. Even Jesus was full
of Father's word that enabled him to defeat Satan who was
tempting him.

O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all day.
Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than
mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

Psalm 119: 97-98

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to
be tempted of the devil.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was
an afterward hungered.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the
Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live
by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of
the mouth of God.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth
him on a pinnacle of the temple.

And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself
down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge
concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up,
lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not
tempt the Lord thy God.

Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Matthew 4: 1-11

You can't defeat Satan if you don't have the word of God to counter him, as the word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17). Get to know that in the physical children are unwise for they have very limited knowledge. In the spiritual one is a baby, a child, until one has fed oneself much with spiritual food which is the word of God.

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3: 17-18

Moreover it is the word of God that instructs one to perfection unto righteousness (2 Timothy 3: 16-17).

Chapter 2

The Obedience Factor

Obedience is the foundation of the Christian faith as one's salvation begins when one obeys the word of God by believing and putting one's faith in Christ Jesus and must continue in the same way throughout one's life. Hence without it there is no way one can grow and mature in God as one is not grounded in God.

When one is converted to Christ one becomes spiritually alive again (Ephesians 2:1-5) and gets a new spiritual framework which one need to work on the rest of one's life (Philippians 2:12-13) using one's obedience as one's foundation on which to work on. Now the spiritual framework is referred to in the Scripture as a building, a house, a temple and a church (1 Corinthians 3:9-10, Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Peter 2:2-5, Matthew 7:21-27, Hebrews 3:4-6, 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:16). Now from that fact we find that obedience to Christ is key to one's growth into maturity and be ready for rapture and eternity in heaven with the Lord. Just as a building needs to be built into completion so as to serve its

intended purpose, so is the Christian life for serving the Lord on the earth and for living eternally in heaven. A Christian as a building and being the body of Christ is complete when is mature spiritually.

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 2:15-17

After the creation of man and the blessing that followed (Genesis 1:26-29) what followed is that God commanded man to be obedient to him in life which was to be a foundation of life and told him very plainly that disobedience would lead to sure death as he knew Satan (Lucifer) had been cast out of heaven and was going to tempt them into disobedience (Revelation 12:7-9). But alas, Adam and Eve did not acknowledge God in their lives who

God was and the need to obey him and instead they saw what the world offered and only saw the need to gratify the desires of the flesh and lost focus on God focusing on the self. Now for one to live in obedience to God the Creator, that is the key that unlocks eternal life with God in heaven.

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

He is a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently up on that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

Luke 6:46-48

Jesus Christ who is the Word of God is the rock where one builds on by putting one's faith in and one remains intact by one's continual obedience to the word of God.

And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:4-7

One's faith is only established when one is steadfast in walking with Christ Jesus and that walk is essentially being obedient to his sayings which is the word of God. One continue to be more and more rooted in Christ by continual obedience to him.

Therefore without obedience to God there is no heaven for one but only hell awaits one as heaven is for the mature in Christ Jesus only. Obedience to God can be equated to life in God and blessings from God. It can as well be equated to righteousness, which is a key factor in entering heaven, just as holiness.

In the foregoing chapters in my first volume I have dealt on many factors that can assist a Christian in growing in the

faith and coming to maturity. Those factors are listed in the epistle of apostle Peter to the Church but in my own opinion going by what the scripture say, I do find that there are other equally important factors that need consideration and which on each the scripture has much to say touching on the life of a Christian and which I am now going to touch on together with the scriptures touching on them and in the end I believe you will also agree with me that they too are necessary although the apostle had not listed them in the key scripture of the foregoing (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Now to begin with, I do begin with the Obedience factor. From the onset it should be noted that in the beginning after creation, it is the lack of obedience (disobedience) that led to the fall of the first man Adam and that brought great misery to the human population to date in various dimensions and to the animals too indirectly. (Genesis 3:1-24, 6:5-7, Romans 5:12-21; 8:2-23).

The many problems we have now like diseases, sicknesses as well as death came as a result of disobedience (lack of obedience) and which is sin. Mankind would have not tasted death at all if had not disobeyed God and would have lived forever throughout, fellowshiping with God and

dominating all other creatures. Man was created to live forever, created in the image and likeness of God the Creator. (Genesis 1:26-28).

Jesus Christ is the foundation of Christianity and therefore let us look at his life as he is our perfect example in life.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in **Christ Jesus:**
Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and **became obedient unto death**, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

From the above scripture it comes out clear that only obedience in God shows that one is maturing/is mature in God and God approves such a one and is ready to exalt one appropriately at the right time. Jesus Christ was only exalted after much obedience.

How about you and I who are in Christ? The answer is obvious. Let us continue in obedience to God and at God's time we will be exalted up into heaven (raptured) to be with the Lord forever.

AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice,

Who is worthy to open the book, and to lose the seals thereof?

And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon:

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to lose the seven seals thereof.

Revelation 5:1-5

From the above scripture it is quite clear that only Jesus Christ who was obedient to God unto death was found worthy in heaven at God's throne to open and read that book after losing the seven seals thereon for he faithfully did God's will by accepting to come on earth to die for the sins of mankind and thereby brought redemption.

Born again Christians are only worth their salt if they remain obedient to their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:13) and by extension qualify to be with him in his eternal kingdom in heaven. So it is not how many times one confesses to be a Christian but how many times he obeys Christ that matters most (Matthew 7:21, 12:46-50). So the more we obey God the better for us as we mature in God in the process and lest we forget this fact: Only the mature and holy will be raptured into heaven as obedience to God leads to righteousness.

Also get to know that obedience to the word of God strengthens one's life in God and is a must for a Christian's growth which is of absolute necessity as Christ is coming at the rapture of the Church to take only those who are mature in Christianity and not those who are immature.

Let me take you now to various scriptures even not all, touching on the need to be obedient to the commandments of God (the word of God).

Let me now take you to the scriptures to see some of them how God the Father says on obedience as well as what God the Son says followed by the benefits/blessings of obedience followed by examples of those who were obedient to God and lastly the consequences for disobedience in that respect.

God the Father speaks

THEREFORE thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.

Deuteronomy 11:1

AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and thou be perfect.

And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him,

As for, behold, my covenant is saying, with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Genesis 17:1-4

Abraham became the father of faith by his obedience to God.

NOW therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

Deuteronomy 4:1

Exactly what I said that you and me obey God and live and enter heaven. That is why Moses had to exhort the Israelites so that they can go in and possess the promised

Land. As for now Jesus Christ has promised heaven for those who are in Him (John 14:1-3), only let us not be troubled in our hearts but by faith just obey the Lord.

NOW these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:

Deuteronomy 6:1

The same words. Christians have the same in the Holy Bible- the 66 chapters: 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. Now let me add another word here which his, obeying is possessing.

And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is this day.

And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

Deuteronomy 6:24-25

We obey and live and become righteous too in the process.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men
of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

And say thou unto them, Thus says the LORD God of
Israel; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this
covenant,

Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought
them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace,
saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all
which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will
be your God:

That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your
fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey,
as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O
LORD.

Jeremiah 11:1-5

Now the Lord God of Israel has not finished with the
Church. But please don't tell me why is the Author always

giving us scriptures touching on the Israelites and applying it to the Church? Well, the Israelites were a shadow of God's Church and now we who have believed in Jesus Christ we are the real true Church of God.

Just as God made a covenant with the Israelites whom he by His love had chosen as his own people, the same applies now to the Church of Christ who by faith have now become God's chosen people (1 Peter 2:7-10). When got saved we literally entered into a covenant walk with God which demands obedience. Just as the Israelites were promised the land of Canaan if they were obedient to God it is the same with born - again Christians who have been promised Heaven if are obedient to Christ.

They were removed from Egypt where they had a rough time under Pharaoh the king of Egypt.

We were delivered from the world under Satan who made us to sin. Theirs it was a physical removal. Ours is both a physical and spiritual removal but it was begun by our soul (spiritual) and it will be completed by our body (physical) at the coming of the Lord to take us where we belonged at our conversion (Romans 8:22-24, 2 Corinthians 5:1-5,

Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:50-58, Ephesians 2:4-7).

Now where obedient born-again Christians have been promised to go and possess cannot be compared to Canaan which was flowing with milk and honey as what flows from heaven is too marvelous as life flows there (Revelation 22:1-2, 14).

Christians are in a covenant walk with the Lord which is a big blessing indeed! And to walk against it in disobedience is but a curse as God has said in his word by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah. The going seems to be tough on Christians but it is worth walking and possible by faith and the grace of God. So let us encourage each other in the Lord and keep walking obeying.

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;
A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command you this day:
And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon mount Ger'-i-zim and the curse upon mount E'-bal.

Deuteronomy 11:26-29

And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.

So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.

And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.

And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.

And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle, according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed.

And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.

Or whether it were two days or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed.

At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

Numbers 9:15-23

The above is a classical example of total obedience by the children of Israel and which God expects from the Church of Christ as well in order for the Church to mature up and finally be raptured into heaven, just as the children of Israel had to be totally obedient to God in order to reach the promised land, which was the land of Canaan. Now look at the following scripture:

AND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Eli'-jah talking with him.

Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Eli'-jah.

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Matthew 17:1-5

The above looked like some movie to the disciples of Jesus. But it was a class room of where the Teacher (God) taught them a good lesson of being obedient to the Lord always.

The church of Christ has to mature up through continual obedience to their Master in order to be promoted to be in heaven when rapture takes place, as obedience is equated to righteousness and has it's benefits (Deuteronomy 6:24-25) moreover it is mandatory for entry into heaven (Revelation 19:6).

God the Son speaks

Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a man, which built his house upon a rock:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Matthew 7:21-25

In the above scripture Jesus was touching on salvation which is an Institution of God and which is likened to a house and all Institutions as well as houses all must have some form of structure. So salvation is a spiritual structure that need to be built beginning with obedience to the word of God as the foundation and faith as the first (main) pillar which need to be supported by other pillars which I have indicated as factors both in the first book and this second volume on Christian maturity to bring growth and maturity and that is why these pillars are required as is recorded in the epistle of Apostle Peter to the body of Christ (2 Peter 1:1-8). Obedience is mandatory and fundamental as a foundation to stand on and the pillars for support. Now if that is not done then on the last day there is going to be a big fall! (Verses 26-27). Remember the case of Judas

Iscariot who did not reach the desired destination same to Lot's wife as a result of disobedience. Lack of obedience brought the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and, thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God, and do it.

Luke 8:19-21

The issue at hand is not relationship but rather, hearing the word of God and doing it.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

John 14:15

Short, simple and clear statement. Remember what God says that we love him (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). To love is to do righteousness.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

John 15:1-10

Obedience becomes a key factor in a Christian's life as without it one detaches oneself from the Lord who is the Word of God and therefore retards growth which would have led one to reach maturity in one's salvation. You can read these scriptures: John 1:1, Revelation 19:13. Let me now illustrate the point in the physical. Suppose you have a plant in your garden and instead of leaving it to grow now and then you keep on uprooting and transplanting it at another location. The question is, when will it begin to grow and finally mature? Not at all. That too applies to spiritual growth in a Christian - one can never mature in disobedience to the Lord by not obeying the Lord's commandments. Now that is a central principle in Christianity and that must be embraced at all times.

Abiding in Christ is abiding in obedience and is fruitful. Obedience in Christ makes one a true disciple as one is a disciplined person. Such a person will continue in God's

love. From that scripture there are lessons to be learnt, for instance why some Christians are not fruitful, why some don't receive from the Lord although they have asked.

And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

John 8:29

Now that is a revelation from Jesus: By always obeying God is a guarantee of him being with one. Let us be careful lest we are on our own without the Holy Spirit! Read further 1 John 3:7-10

Benefits in Obedience

There are of course many, many benefits in obedience to God as contained in some of the scriptures that follow here under.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Leb'-a-non.

Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

To show that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

Psalm 92:12-15

Obedience is equated to righteousness and makes one to be planted in God as God is righteous and makes one to flourish by being fruitful in life even in old age.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:1-2,5,7

For one to remain in Christ abiding in him one must continue in obedience to God and thereby be made to be fruitful and being cleaned in the process to be even more fruitful and his or her prayers are also answered as well, just as Jesus whose prayers were always answered by his Father for he remained obedient to him (John 9:30-31; 11:39-42) otherwise you are useless and to be judged accordingly (Matthew 5:13; 3:10-12)

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Exodus 19:5-6

O that that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!

Deuteronomy 5:29

That was God's wish on his people the Israelites. It is the same on you and me that we fear God and keep his commandments always and it would be well not only to us but to our children as well forever!

And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel:

And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.

For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

Deuteronomy 32:45-47

Do you see what I have seen? Obedience is life.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for

then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Joshua 1:8

Many want success and prosperity in their lives but the key to all that is obedience to God.

AND it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

And all those blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

The LORD shall establish thee a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.

And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath, if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:

And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

Luke 11:27-28

Now my reader forget all other 'blessings' now this is it- The real blessing. Read also Psalm 32:1-2 and Revelation 19:9

But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:
For there is no respect of persons with God.

Romans 2:10-11

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like
unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and
straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and
continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a
doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

James 1:22-25

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he
that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

1 John 2:17

Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that is was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

Isaiah 48:16-19

All those benefits are there for you and me if we are obedient and our names will not be removed from the book of life. (Revelation 3:5-6, Daniel 12:1, Exodus 32:30-35).

There is need for you and I to abide forever in everlasting life in heaven only we need to continue observing and

doing the will of God (the word of God) as the word abideth forever. (John 1:1-2, John 6:68).

Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

1John 3:21-22

If one is both obedient and committed to God, God will be more intimate to such and also be ready to answer such a one's request/prayer. You can read the following scriptures: Exodus 33:12-17, Hebrews 3:1-2, Job 1:1-8, Joshua 1:1-5; 11:15, 1 Samuel 3.

It is of utmost importance that a Christian be obedient continually and not just sometimes lest all he or she has done go into the drain/ is wasted (Ezekiel 33:12-13).

Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of

the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

Ezekiel 33:12-13

Get to know that God in the book of Matthew 3:13-17 God was well pleased with Jesus Christ not only as a Son but also because he was always obedient to him and by that he fulfilled all righteousness and God also answered his prayers (John 8:25-29; 11:41-42, Matthew 5:17). The only exception is in the book of Matthew (Matthew 26:36-56) as it was God's will for him to suffer

To bring salvation to mankind and received a name above all names (Philippians 2:5-11). We too God will be more pleased with us if we remain obedient to him.

In Christianity one must learn to walk with the Lord of one's obedience by always being in the light as God is light and in him there is no darkness. Walking in light simply

means walking in the truth of God (in God's word). The Lord Jesus Christ said he was the light of the world as long as he was here on earth.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 8:12

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 1:5-7

For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

3 John 3-4

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Philippians 1:27-30

Walking in light is fellowshiping with God as God is the truth and therefore obeying the truth is walking with God. It may not be so easy to do so but it is highly recommended as it is God's will although it includes conflicts and sufferings as various scriptures do record and apostles Paul

and Peter have in their epistles to the church of Christ have given a lot of encouragements on the issue and advising her to remain steadfast in the truth of God whatever the circumstances.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

1 John 3:22

Now Na'-a-man, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.

And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Na'-a-man's wife.

And she said unto her mistress,

Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samar'-i-a! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

And one went in, and told his lord saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.

And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Na'-a-man my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

And I was so, when E-li'-sha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

So Na'-a-man came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of E-li'-sha.

And E-li'-sha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

But Na'-a-man was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

Are not Ab-a'-na and Phar'-par, rivers of Damascus, better, than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

2 Kings 5:1-14

Please read this too in Proverbs 3:5-6.

We need to know and appreciate that the Christian Walk begins with obedience and progress and grow in obedience and end in maturity in obedience. But we do know that obedience is believing/trusting in God's word and acting on it. It follows therefore by stopping to obey God's word one stops to progress and grow in God.

Look at the life of Abraham a friend of God and the father of faith, it was in obedience to God and for sure he prospered. Our partiality in obedience spoils it all for us and retards our growth and postpones our maturity.

Lack of obedience or partial obedience results in lack of maturity and hence no chance to our entering heaven. We need not depend on our intellect but depend on our spirituality. Naaman was acting on his flesh and not in the spirit.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall be not room enough to receive it.

AND as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Si'-lo'-am, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

John 9:1-7

The above scripture corroborates the fact that only obedience can lead to/result to one getting healed physically or spiritually. This case being physical just as the case of Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-14).

Therefore it follows that if Naaman only went to the prophet Elijah and did not as well obey the prophet's instruction to the letter but remained adamant thinking to wash in river Abana or river Pharpar or washed at river Jordan but not seven times, he would have remained leprous forever. Same to lame man if he was only satisfied with the anointing with clay by Jesus and not taking a step of faith and wash in the pool of Siloam. Similarly spiritually, only total obedience results in growth and maturity in Christ Jesus and not partial obedience which retards growth and hence no maturity in sight. Now that should sober us all so that we strive and endeavour to always be obedient to God in life for our own good or else we are but damned and are most likely destined to hell and not to the rapture of the Church of Christ and entry into heaven. All truth is parallel as the physical manifestation are triggered by the spiritual realm presence / existence; in that the spiritual birth out the physical accordingly.

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your

vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:10-12

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 22: 15-18

All those blessings God promised Abraham simply because he obeyed the voice of the Lord his God.

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord and do not the thing which I say?

Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

Luke 6:46-48

The obedient will not be shaken in life at all and will continue to walk tall.

Now therefore, if we will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Exodus 19:5-6

If the children of Israel were given that condition of obedience then definitely it applies to the Church of Christ.

BEHOLD my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

Isaiah 42:1-4

We can see from the above scripture in verse 4 that Jesus God's servant will not fail nor be discouraged. We Christians too, need not be discouraged and that way we will not fail in our walk and that calls for perseverance.

Examples of the obedient

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.

As he said also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Mel-chiz'-ed-ek.

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Called of God a high priest after the order of Mel-chiz'-ed-ek.

Hebrews 5:5-10

The obedience of Christ is evident in the above scripture.

And when the days of her purification according to the Law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be holy to the Lord;) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the lord, a young pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

And when they had performed all things according to the law of the lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

Luke 2:22-24; 39

The obedience of the parents of Jesus is evident in the above scripture.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

And the LORD said, I will destroy man who I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and the beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Genesis 6:5-9; 22

The obedience of Noah is evident in the above scripture. You can't walk with God unless you are justified in obeying him always to the letter.

NOW the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Har'-an.

And Abram took Sar'-a-i his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the

souls that they had gotten in Har'-an; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Genesis 12:1-5

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Mo-ri'-ah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Genesis 22: 1-3

The obedience of Abram is evident in the above two scriptures.

And the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

Joshua 11:15

The obedience of Joshua is evident in the above scripture.

NOW it came to pass in the third year of Ho-she'-a son of E'-lah king of Israel, that Hez-e-ki'-ah the son of Ahaz. King of Judah began to reign.

Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi, the daughter of Zach-a-ri'-ah.

And he did that was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Ne-hush'-tan.

He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, not any that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, and

departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

2 Kings 18:1-6

The obedience of king Hezekiah is evident in the above scripture.

Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring his man's blood upon us.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Acts 5:25-29

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.

But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

Acts 26:19-20

The obedience of the apostles is evident in the above two scriptures.

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Isaiah the prophet.

Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Isaiah, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

And he said, How can I, expect some man should guide me?

And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and told him the gospel of Jesus.

Acts 8:26-30, 35

Consequences for disobedience

And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Am'-a-lek, and have utterly destroyed the A-mal'-ek-ites.

But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gil'-gal.

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Samuel 15: 20-23

The disobedience of king Saul led to God rejecting him from being king of Israel.

For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

(for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified).

Romans 2:12-13

The disobedience of many is going to lead to the judgment of God.

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

The disobedience of many is going to lead them to the judgment of God.

But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

1 Timothy 1:8-11

THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

Hebrews 2:1-4

And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said,
Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

Genesis 19:17, 26

The above is a stern warning to the disobedient. They will definitely perish. Even the Israelites who were disobedient during Moses' time when he led them to the promised land likewise perished as they had continued to think of their life in Egypt and continued to murmur and complain to Moses (Numbers 11:1 – 7; 14:1 – 35).

But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

John 9:31

God hears no sinner (the disobedient) but hears only those who worship him and do his will (the obedient). It follows therefore that even Christians must be doers of the word for them to be heard. A Christian's life is a life of prayer and fasting.

If a Christian is not obeying the word of God it means the prayers and fasting done is zero work as cannot be answered and therefore a Christian must learn to be a doer of the word pretty fast and to grow thereby and mature up in total obedience.

For further reading on the consequences of disobedience you can read the book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 28:15-68) and you will be shocked and will definitely have a second thought if you happen to be a victim in disobedience.

But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath

trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

Ezekiel 18:24

You can read also Ezekiel 18:20; 33:18; 11 and Romans 6:33a, on the same issue.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Hebrews 12:14

There is the danger of missing entry into heaven as a result of disobedience as God is holy and heaven is a holy place and therefore only obedience which is righteousness can qualify one entry there.

Remember Adam and Eve who disobeyed God and God sent them forth from the Garden of Eden and closed the place so that they could not enter there again that beautiful garden!!! (Genesis 3:22-24) In heaven there is the tree of life (Revelation 22:10-15).

BUT a certain man named An-a-ni'-as, with Sapph-i'-ra his wife, sold a possession,

And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But Peter said, An-a-ni'-as, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

And An-a-ni'-as hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out and buried him.

And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

Then she fell down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Acts 5:1-11

Not it is that serious to try to be disobedient before a holy God, the Holy One of Israel. In my book “A Christian and How not to backslide” I touched on tricks and jokes which one need to keep away from. Never try any trick in Christianity you will fall flat on your back.

Tricks are for the Devil and his servants and not for born again Christians - These two lied thinking they could trick the apostles only they failed to appreciate the fact that these were Spirit filled and the Holy Spirit normally reveal things to the believers (John 16:13-14, 1 Corinthians 12:7-8).

The duo were not walking in the light and in the truth and their fellowship with God was broken (1 John 1:5-7, John 8:12)

From all the foregoing I can say that obedience is equated to life and also that obedience in Christianity is the mother of all righteousness without which all other factors become vain in themselves if are left alone. (1 Samuel 15:22, Matthew 7:24-27 Luke 11:27-28) it is only in obedience that a Christian can be truly full of righteousness and because God is righteous he definitely will love the obedient more than any other (Psalm 103:17-18, Matthew 21:28-32) no wonder God acknowledges loving his Son Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:13-17) because of his ever obedience (Philippians 2:5-11, Hebrews 10:1-10). God loves the obedient and likes to be associated with them and hears them. (Genesis 5:24; 6:9; 12:1-5/22:1-3/18:16-33/James 2:21-23, John 8:29, 1 John 3:22, John 11:40-44; 9:31).

Consequences for not living by the word of God

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Matthew 3:10

If one does not live by God's word one will not bear any good fruit to God and hence will be judged.

And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing there-on, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee hence forward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

Matthew 21:17-19

Every Christian is likened to a tree which need bear not just any fruit but good fruit and if not bearing good fruit is due for a curse and when that happens, he or she will be no more. A Christian need not carry a name/title only of

‘saved’ (leaves) but good fruits which the Lord is
hungering for daily. You can compare with the message of
the Lord to the church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:15-16).

Fruits meet for repentance, that is, works of righteousness
is expected from all true Christians, which is good fruits.

If one is truly in Christ one will bear good fruit and can be
only unfruitful if he or she has been cut off from Christ
(John 15:1-6)

If one is in Christ, he or she produces good fruit in season
and out of season (Psalm 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:1-2)

Chapter 3

The Prayer and Fasting factor

Prayer and fasting is yet another factor that helps a Christian to grow and mature in the things of God. This is the only known means by which a Christian can communicate with God and therefore it is crucial in Christianity and it is everything in the Christian Walk. It is the life-line of a Christian and one cannot do without it.

It can be likened to spiritual breathing in and out of a Christian.

I can say that if a Christian can stop completely to pray and fast then it means has stopped living spiritually and can be declared a dead being in the spiritual realm. Virtually all issues of life in a Christian are solved by praying and fasting. Fasting is a gear in prayer. When prayer seems not to work, a Christian has to engage a gear or an accelerator and that is to get into a fast. It is in fasting that one achieves a breakthrough (a success) in a tough and difficult/complicated issues in the Christian life. Prayer and fasting is a major tool in spiritual warfare and spiritual warfare is the normal life in the Christian walk as one has to engage in it daily throughout the Christian life.

Christianity is and will remain not a bed of roses. Neither is it always bread and butter. Why? Because one has to contend with battles everyday in life. The enemy of God (Satan) actually he is the arch enemy, is also an enemy of the Christians (who happen to be God's children by a spiritual birth) and are therefore in God's family. Because Satan is an opposer of God, he will oppose God's children. Just as prayer and fasting is a major tool in spiritual warfare for a Christian, likewise it is a Christian's power house. Through prayer and fasting a Christian is empowered by God by the Holy Spirit in the Christian and the spirit strengthened in the Christian. It is only in prayer and fasting that a Christian becomes and remains powerful and therefore by limiting prayer and fasting a Christian begin to be weak and eventually dies spiritually. Christians who rarely pray and fast are Christians who are generally weak in their spirit and are not strong at all. Christians who frequently pray and fast on the other hand, are very powerful in their spirit and can do exploits in the spiritual realm. It is in prayer and fasting that a Christian overcomes temptations in life which are the order of the day. Satan will keep on tempting a Christian hoping to have him or her

to sin so as to lead him or her in the backsliding path in life (which is the drifting away from God and the things of God). Satan wants to alienate Christians from God that way. Backsliding leads to spiritual death in a Christian and that is a sure way of missing entering heaven to be with the Lord forever in eternity and that, is what the enemy is fighting for in a Christian's life. A Christian must therefore make prayer and fasting his/her life. Prayer and fasting was the lifestyle of Christ while he was with his disciples in his human form on earth. Therefore to pray and fast for a Christian is not an option but a must (it is a compulsory thing to do). Just like in the other factors same to this- a Christian must grow by praying and fasting to become mature in spiritual matters. To fast by a Christian is also to eat strong meat in the spiritual sense and is a tell-tale sign of some maturity in a Christian. The Holy scriptures both in the Old Testament and in the New testament is full of accounts of people of God praying to God and also fasting. I now present to you some of the scriptures as follows:

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

and saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, it is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus Christ prior to beginning his ministry he first went into prayer and fasting. Prayer and fasting is a key (a golden key I would say) in the hand of any Christian. It is a special key just like faith and love in the Christian walk.

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up in a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Matthew 14:22-23

Jesus was always praying.

And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

Luke 6:12-13

Jesus was still going to pray at his usual place in a mountain. It is good to pray before embarking to work just as Jesus did. (Psalm 37:5-6).

Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Psalm 37:5-6

A Christian need to commit his/her way to the Lord-what he/she intends to do. By doing so in prayer, it will be well for him/her in his/her doings. Just as these other scriptures say (Proverbs 16:3, Psalm 55:22, Philippians 4:6-7).

Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Proverbs 16:3

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Psalms 55:22

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks giving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

All is just prayers including supplications.

And they came to a place which was named Geth-sem'-ane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me; nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.

And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

Mark 14:32-42

Now some things come out clear in the above scripture. That to overcome temptation by not entering (involving in it and sinning), one must pray. Also, the flesh is always weak in doing the will of God and enjoys leisure / rest. So a Christian must curtail that by praying to have the spirit strengthened, which is willing and it is only the flesh (the body) that is always on the opposite side. Sleeping is resting and the body likes just that. But a Christian must put into subjection to do the will of God both spiritual and physical in righteousness. If a Christian does not do that the body is going to disappoint (as is usual) as it is supposed to be ruled and if not and given a chance, it is a bad ruler because of the sinful nature in it. It leads a Christian to the worldly and not to the godly as it is of the world.

We have seen in these scriptures above that Jesus lived a prayerful life up to his death on the cross for the remission of sins for all the mankind. That, is a pattern he left to the Church and which it must continue in, just as many others we have just gone through and a few others to follow suit

in due course. But before I completely wind up on the lifestyle of prayer and fasting by Jesus, let me give another two instances before going to the scriptures that encourage the same as well as the scriptures that record the prayer and fasting of some of God's children.

And it came to pass, as he was alone praying his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and other say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, the Christ of God.

Luke 9:18-20

Jesus is seen yet again in prayer.

AND it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Give us day by day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given, you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

A Christian need to ask, seek and knock in prayer and fasting for God to provide to him or her as necessary. Praying and fasting is the means through which Christians are sorted out by God. God is a friend of Christians.

AND he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself,

Though I fear not God, nor regardeth man;

Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:1- 8

The Lord was encouraging his disciples to pray always and not to be discouraged (not to faint) and that God is faithful and will answer their prayers though sometimes not instantly. He further went to tell them that the big issue also was touching on their faith. That is why he posed that question, why? Because it is impossible to please God without faith.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Ephesians 6:17-18

It is still prayer and prayer as seen in this scripture.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

God's children are required to humble themselves in prayer and fasting seeking the face of God.

The only known way of humbling the flesh (the body) is by fasting so as to weaken it and in the process at the same time to have the spirit strengthened to enable it overcome the flesh (the body) being submissive to do God's bidding (God's will). Also required by God is be holy and righteous when involving in prayer and fasting. (James 5:16).

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

James 5:16

Before praying one need confess any sin one may have committed in order to be right with God first.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye brake every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Isaiah 58:4-7

Fasting with some sin in one's heart is not acceptable before God.

Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

1 Chronicles 16:11

By seeking the Lord in prayer we also seek his strength (his anointing) in us and are empowered in the process.

Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

James 5:13-15

It is all about prayer, prayer as the solution solver to our problems. But at the same time holiness - no sin and also faith must be there.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

John 16:24

The Lord was waiting for his disciples to ask and they shall receive and by then, none of them had asked. The Holy Spirit is the one who can assist us to ask in our prayers in the most sensible way.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27

Now what else may be required in our prayers?

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13

We need to pray to God not half heartedly but wholeheartedly.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

1 John 3:22

We need not expect anything from God when we pray to him and we have been walking in disobedience (not keeping his commandments). What follows now are just some of those people that prayed to God and even fasted.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that E-li'-jah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

1 Kings 18:36-37

And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

Exodus 15:24-26

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Daniel 6:10

And Hez-e-ki'ah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hez-e-ki'-ah went up into the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD.

AND Hez-e-ki'-ah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwelleth between the cher'-u-bim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sen-nach'-er-ib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

Of a truth LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,

AND have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

2 Kings 19:14-19

So Hannah, rose up after they had eaten in Shi'-loh, and after they had drunk. Now E'-li the priest sat upon seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.

And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

1 Samuel 1:9-11

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Al'-phe-us, and Simon Zelo'-tes, and Judas the brother of James.

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 1:12-14

On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the house top to pray about the sixth hour:

Acts 10:9

NOW about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread).

And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

Acts 12:1-5

NOW there were in the church that was An'-ti-och certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Ni'-ger, and Lu'-ci-us of Cy-re'-ne and Man'-a-en,

which had been brought up with Herod the te'-t-rarch, and Saul.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Acts 13:1-3

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by sooth saying:

The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.

And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Acts 16:16-18

But do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake:
because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within
me.

I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed
up and down as the locust.

My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of
fatness.

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked
upon me they shook their heads.

Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy
mercy.

Psalm 109:21-26

Chapter 4

The Meekness Factor

Meekness also known as humility is another factor in Christianity and which need to grow in a Christian to maturity. It is among the fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Jesus Christ was very humble in life and it follows therefore that Christians (who are his followers), their lives need to portray this as well. Now let us look at these three scriptures touching on the life of Jesus.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Isaiah 53:7

Let this mind be in you, which was also in **Christ Jesus:**
Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But **made himself of no reputation**, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

And being found in fashion as a man, he **humbled himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:5-8

The above two scriptures show us the meekness of Christ. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

1 Peter 2:23

Jesus Christ just committed himself to the Father who judges righteously. God is both righteous and just through and through. Look at this other scripture what Jesus says.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for **I am meek and lowly in heart:** and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 11:29

Let us now continue to explore what the scriptures say on this issue.

Better it is to **be of a humble spirit** with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 16:19

But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

And **unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.**

Luke 6:27-29

That is how humility should be. It seems a very hard thing to do but by the grace of God and with the help of the Holy Spirit in a Christian, it can be realized.

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and to **be clothed with humility:** for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:5

Humility is that important in that by it one can get grace in the sight of God. Without the grace of God, one can't go anywhere – can't succeed in the end (can't enter into heaven) to be with the Lord for one is saved by grace and can only enter into heaven by the same grace.

A man's pride shall bring him low: but **honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.**

Proverbs 29:23

Pride is the opposite of humility. Satan was proud in heart and that brought him low (was demoted) from heaven to earth (Ezekiel 28:14-17, Revelation 12:7-9)

Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, **seek meekness:** it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

Zephaniah 2:3

Now that is something worth reckoning! By being meek (humble) one may be hidden (kept away) from God's anger.

When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, **sit not down in the highest room**, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden him;

And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

But **when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room**; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

For whoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and **he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.**

Luke 14:8-11

Jesus Christ was trying to put across a point to his audience the importance of being meek in spirit and went on to give an illustration on the same with the consequences thereon.

By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life.

Proverbs 22:4

How precious for one to live humbling oneself in life. Only one need to add some salt to it by fearing the Lord. Then what? The benefits are threefold! Now let us look at this account.

AND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. and when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Ma-ha-na'-im.

And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Se'-ir, the country of E'-dom.

And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and women servants: and I have set to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

And said, If Esau come to one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

Genesis 32:1-11

Now here was Jacob who had through tricks obtained both his brother's (Esau's) birthright and blessing before and now was going to face that same brother. He felt guilty and cornered, especially when his messengers told him Esau his brother was coming to meet him accompanied with four hundred men. Jacob felt he had done and went back to his old tricks by dividing his people and flocks into two bands with a hope that the one ahead if attacked, the other behind

can escape (he of course being in the second band behind the first). He also sent presents to his brother to appease him with but still in his spirit he felt 'all this is not going to work this time round'. Only God can intervene on his behalf and he humbled himself before the Lord praying for help. Surely humility can cut one down to size, removing pride and so on.

Let us not wait to be humbled but begin to learn to humble ourselves until we are totally humble. It is bad/shameful to be humbled by circumstances. No wonder prophet Isaiah prophesied long time ago concerning the ministry of John the Baptist that the people need to humble themselves through repentance for the Lord to save them. That way, they will have a highway for the Lord to pass through (a highway of holiness- for the Lord is to come through it). The mountain and the hill will then have been made low for the Lord (which are sins-pride included) for the place (the heart) to be made straight and plain. (Isaiah 40:3-5).

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.**

1 Timothy 1:15

Here we see Apostle Paul showing humility saying he was a chief sinner. Do you know why he shows humility? Because Christ Jesus humbled him when he came to his life when he was the man known as Saul, the persecutor (Acts 8:1-4; 9:1-6)

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

2 Timothy 2:24-26

Now Apostle Paul could say those words to his son in the faith Timothy as he himself he was already walking that

life, because of Christ who had saved him, walking as a gentle and humble man of God.

Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings with calves of a year old?

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth **the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**

Micah 6:6-8

Looks like the whole issue has been summarized to us in the above scripture. All the same, let us look at this other one, as there is no harm.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

James 4:10

If you want a lift from God do the simple thing-humble yourself.

From all the above it is quite evident that a Christian has to grow in meekness to maturity and full maturity to be Christ like, just as in the others we have just learnt.

Chapter 5

The Fellowship Factor

Christian fellowships (the meeting of the brethren in the Lord) to encourage (exhort) each other is another important aspect in the Christian walk. The scriptures touch on this issue of fellowshiping together which can be both in the various houses of the brethren as well as at the normal place of worship. Christian fellowships are platforms for Christian growth and are golden opportunities apart from the normal Sunday services in the local churches. Unlike the Sunday services that are limited to Sundays save for Saturday for Christian weddings. The fellowships are open 24/7 (can be done every day) just as the disciples of Jesus did in the early church. To a great extent they are like the normal Sunday services save for say preaching- as here it is more on teachings on the doctrines of Christ on how to live the Christian life also save for things like tithe paying and other offerings which are more the preserve of Sunday services in the local church assembly.

In the Christian fellowships one is surrounded by other brethren who have the Holy Spirit as well as Christ being

in their midst who is a Spirit and therefore one cannot come out the same.

If one was cold or warm one will most likely come out hot as the power of God there is in abundance and can be likened to a filling station (many infilling of the Holy Spirit) occur at such meetings. Surely one must be positively impacted (Matthews 18: 18-20, Acts 4:13).

Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my father which is in heaven.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name there I am in the midst of them.

Matthew 18:18-20

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and **they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.**

Acts 4:13

In a Christian fellowship the brethren in the Lord are not alone but are with Jesus, who is in their midst and who likes fellowshiping as God too. (Luke 24:13-35, Genesis 3:8-11; 18:22-33). Now fellowshiping is a sign of unity and God loves unity just as we read in this scripture from the book of Psalms.

BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for **brethren to dwell together in unity!**

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: **for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.**

Psalms 133

Although the scripture was talking on the Israelites (the twelve tribes of Israel) as brethren, but it can equally apply to the brethren in the Lord who are by the way the true

Israel, in the spiritual sense, as are born by God Himself of his Spirit. There is blessing as well as life in unity, and unity is people coming together in are accord. Let us look further at other scriptures.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

And having a high priest over the house of God;

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from as evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but **exhorting one another:** and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Hebrews 10:19-25

The brethren can only provoke one another unto love and to good works as well as exhorting one another if they assemble together in some fellowship of sort. By doing so they can continue to hold fast the profession of their faith.

As I said, Christian fellowships are ideal opportunities for further growth in the Christian faith. It should be more now that the day of the appearance of Christ to his Church is drawing nearer and nearer, by the day.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you._cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.

James 4:8

One can draw near to God in Christian fellowships. Repentance is required by God before he can be part of the fellowship, if any has fallen into sin as the heart must be pure for God to draw near.

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

To call upon the Lord in truth is to call upon him with a pure heart. The scripture is talking about a group and not necessarily an individual and a fellowship is composed of brethren.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

And all that believed were together and had all things common;

And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 2:38-47

That was a manifestation of a perfect unity. No wonder God was pleased with that church and poured blessings daily by saving souls.

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

Acts 5:12-14

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9

Christians were and are called by God to fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ who is their Lord. He is also their brother mind you, as they have joined the family of God. (Hebrews 2:11-18).

Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Proverbs 27:17

The brethren are the friend to Jesus Christ they themselves being friends and sharpen and improve each other's life in various ways in their fellowships.

How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

1 Corinthians 14:26-33

A Christian must grow to maturity by taking part in Christian fellowships. Assembling in fellowships is part and parcel of a Christian's life and a Christian need not shy away from them.

Chapter 6

The Perseverance Factor

Perseverance which is also known as endurance, is another factor, key or quality that a Christian must have and I treat it as the last one in summing up the whole Christian Walk. I do treat it so because without it a Christian with all the other factors will not reach one's destination. As you know, the Christian Walk involves spiritual warfare on a daily basis as it is a spiritual walk in the spiritual realm where there is an opposing force (the force of the enemy-Satan) and therefore a Christian must get used to continuing without giving up hope despite all the difficulties on the way. Just as in prayer Jesus told his disciples that they need to always be praying and not to faint (Luke 18:1), it is the same with perseverance despite all that one has to go through. The mission of Jesus Christ on earth was to come and bring a reconciliation between man and God by paying the penalty for sin by dying on the cross to shed his blood for the remission of sins and thereby bringing salvation to man, so that man can have everlasting life with God, his Creator in heaven. A Christian's goal therefore is to reach heaven to be with God forever by living a holy and a

righteous life while on earth as a preparation exercise. Jesus Christ did accomplish his mission because he endured all hardships unto the end. We too (Christians) to achieve reaching heaven we just have to endure to the end. In the Christian Walk there is no going back because we don't have a home here (a spiritual home). We are pilgrims and our home (an eternal home) is in heaven. (Philippians 3:20-21, Hebrews 11:13-16). The motto of a Christian is 'Forwards ever backwards never' which means a Christian does not have a reverse gear and it is only Satan who keeps on trying sell to a Christian a reverse gear which is backsliding and a Christian must refuse that merchandise. The journey of a Christian is a long one and can be likened to moving from the southern hemisphere to the northern hemisphere (from the earth where we live to the third heavens where God lives) as apostle Paul said it was revealed to him by God in a vision (2 Corinthians 12:1-3). In this Journey there is only one connection in the rapture of the saints and in between there are no waiting rooms or stages where Christians can rest but have to continue walking and running and lastly being ushered in by flying (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18). Perseverance is counting the

cost as well as paying the whole cost (Luke 14:25-33). If one stops to build on this scripture, one has stopped persevering (has backslidden) - verses 29 and 30. So one need to keep on building however costly it is, by persevering. I think being home-sick on this journey can encourage one to yearn to be at home to be with the God family in heaven and make one to keep on persevering to the end.

I think I have laid a foundation and now need to go to a series of scriptures that touch on the subject and encouraging Christians. I will begin with Jesus and then followed by Job and then go on and on, on encouragements.

He is despised and rejected of men; **a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:** and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Isaiah 53:3

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Peter 2:24

And being found in fashion as a man, **he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;
And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:8-11

Briefly, Jesus Christ endured all that so as to accomplish his mission. The prophet Isaiah in giving out a prophecy on what Christ Jesus the Son of God was to go through (suffer) he said Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief meaning a persevering man. Apostle Peter says Jesus bore our sins on his own body on the cross (persevered) and apostle Paul says Jesus Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross and persevered by being able to allow himself to

go through all that so as to achieve a goal by bringing salvation to all mankind and he succeeded perfectly well.

If you read the first book of kings (1 Kings 19:1-8) you will see that the angel of the Lord told the prophet Elijah that he needs to arise and eat because the journey to the mountain of God is too great! It follows therefore that Christians need to feed so much on the word of God to sustain them on their way to Heaven and of course to persevere (1Peter 2:1-3, Hebrews 12:22-29)

THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

And his sons went and feasted in their houses, everyone his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came along also among them.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every

side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them:

And the Sa-be'-ans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chal-de'-ans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the

servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshiped,

And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

AGAIN there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdest fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

And the LORD unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

And he took him a potsherd to scrap himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand

of God, and shall we not receive evil? **In all this did not Job sin with his lips.**

Job 1:1-2:10

In both instances in chapter one and in chapter two we see that Job endured all this and he did not sin before the Lord meaning he succeeded in defeating Satan (though he knew not it was Satan binging all these things to him) Satan was working behind the scenes (Job 1:20-21; 2:10).

I did give the account of the life of Jesus Christ the Son of God as the perfect example for Christians and on the life of Job also for Christians as another example as a fellow Christian (a human being) who went through a lot of hardships in life but kept on his faith not losing it and therefore showing that it is also possible with men to persevere in life and win God's approval and be with him finally just as Christ Jesus won God's approval and went back to be with him in heaven.

Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

Daniel 12:10-13

Many of us Christians love only good life and detest trials which are inevitable in the Christian Walk and which leads into our purification. We need to face trials with boldness and peace of mind knowing the end result of such an experience if we remain steadfast in our faith and never to falter (1 Peter 1:7)

Although the scripture is talking about the tribulation period Christians daily go on many trials even now and have to persevere to the end to be truly saved (Matthew 24:8-13)

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, **he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised** to them that love him.

James 1:12

Perseverance pays beautifully in the end and therefore calls for the need to practice the same as a sign of maturity.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

Revelation 14:13

One can only die in the Lord if one has endured everything hence on earth up to the end. One who does not endure if dies, dies out of the Lord.

In the Christian Walk on must go through many storms of life and which one must overcome and to remain strong and established in the faith.

Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go

over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were in jeopardy.

And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

Luke 8:22-24

Don't panic when the various storms of life pound on you, rather keep on telling your Master the storm and it will be calmed down. Better still rebuke it in the name of the Lord until it gives in. After my deliverance and restoration back to the Lord, I have learned the soldier attitude and hold any storm that come by rebuking and cursing it in the name of the Lord and continue to triumph. Where I do find it not calmed, I re examine my life and if I find any sin, I straight away repent to God of it asking for forgiveness and the cleansing of my soul and then continue rebuking until it gives in to my commands. Brother and sister. it works and it is not just some imagination. If the storm does not give

in, I get into prayer and fasting or hand it over to the Lord (Matthew 11:28-30).

Now never be passive with life storms but be active by acting on them there and then or else they can overwhelm and consume you altogether. In the natural soldiers do not keep quiet and fold their hands when confronted by an enemy but rather they act immediately to counter the attack. You as a spiritual soldier act before it is too late. Storms manifest as physical things many times but they have their origin in the spiritual realm and therefore let us stop being novices in this Walk.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but **he that endureth to the end shall be saved.**

Matthew 10:16-22

You can in this scripture see the Lord telling his disciples what they are to expect in their Christian Walk and what to do. Opposition and persecution await them but only them that will endure all that will be saved. The key word is endurance.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14

It is to be focused on what is ahead of you as apostle Paul told the church at Philippi, that is to continue pressing on towards one's goal, which calls for endurance in whatever one meets on one's way and that is why he said he forgets what he has passed through (what is behind) and reach forth for one which is ahead of him.

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. **In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.**

John 16:32-33

Here prior to his arrest, sentence and crucifixion, Jesus was addressing his disciples about what was about to happen to him and what will transpire and that although they are going to have tribulation in the world they need to cheer and not give up as he himself has overcome the world meaning they too can do the same if they remain in him as

he was with the Father (they too were not alone as they would be with him as well) (John 14:15-17).

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and **watching thereunto with all perseverance** and supplication for all saints,

Ephesians 6:17-18

It is watching what is going on in life with all perseverance. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and **ye shall have tribulation ten days: be though faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; **he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.**

Revelation 2:8-11

In the above scripture to the church Jesus tells her to persevere through all the tribulation and it will be well for her in the end.

It is a faithful saying; For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: If we deny him, he also will deny us:

2 Timothy 2:11-12

The choice is ours, you and me, in the above scripture. What do you or I want? Let us choose one.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. **If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;** if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

John 15:20

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

But rejoyce, inasmuch as **ye are partakers of Christ's suffering; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.**

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busy body in other men's matters.

Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

1 Peter 4:12-16

From all those scriptures we do see one thing that is clear, that Christians are obviously going to face a lot of hardships in their lives and that it should not seem a strange

thing to them and that they have to persevere all that, putting their hope and trust in their God who is most faithful. After going through all that without giving up, what awaits them is great, very great.

Therefore Christians need to cultivate the culture of perseverance in their lives and have it mature in them as it is part and parcel of the Christian Walk. Without having this quality Christianity is but nothing in a Christian as can't achieve/can't reach one's goal. The goal is to be in heaven with the Lord and live a happy and peaceful life for eternity and it therefore profit nothing not to be there with the Lord.

Never quit salvation as by doing so you lose the opportunity to mature up and be ready when the Lord comes for the saints. Remember the case of Ruth who had a double tragedy by first losing her father-in-law who was by name Elimelech and later she lost her husband whose name was Chilion but despite all that, she did not quit her marriage but rather stayed with her mother-in-law who was known as Naomi.

Now humanly speaking, that was truly a pathetic and hopeless state as the bread winners were all dead. Ruth

stayed put although her mother-in-law had tried to persuade her and Orpah to leave when their husbands died and Orpah actually left (she quit the marriage) and we don't hear about her again. Ruth persevered in her marital home and eventually ended being wedded to Boaz of whom was like a redeemer to her as she now had a bread winner. The marriage made both Boaz, and Ruth to be part of the lineage of Jesus Christ. Do take a close look at the following scriptures and learn much about what I have narrated: The whole book of Ruth and the book of Matthew (Matthew 1:1-16).

As a Christian, you have been espoused to a husband who is Jesus Christ the Messiah and who is your Redeemer.

Therefore you must stay put (persevere) relating with him and being close to him so that finally you will be wedded to him. (2 Corinthians 11:2-4, Revelation 19:5-9).

Get to know that there is God's work-in-progress, as well as Jesus Christ's in your life, which is going on continuously molding you, washing you, cleansing and purifying you so as to have you perfected and ready for the big day, that is, the marriage supper of the Lamb of God and therefore stay put regardless of what you are going

through in life. (Jeremiah 18:1-5, Philippians 1:3-6, Ephesians 5:25-32)

Now look at the example of Jesus Christ how he persevered and brought us eternal salvation.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Called of God a high priest after the order of Mel-chiz'-ed-ek.

Hebrews 5:8-10

Christians mature up and are perfected by abiding in Christ Jesus who is the true vine by persevering. By so doing, one is essentially as an individual, working one's salvation on one's part as God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit do his part in one's life resulting in one's full maturity/perfection and be in an acceptable state for rapture.

Now just as a reminder, Orpah decided and quit her marital home and was no more. If you decide to quit salvation

because you lack perseverance, I can assure you that you will not be found in heaven which happens to be the eternal home of the elect (the holy saints) (Philippians 3:20). You will be among ‘the nobody’ instead of being among ‘the somebody’, that is, those who have made it into heaven and in the big banquet.

This factor of perseverance can be considered as Christians’ spiritual wilderness and is meant by God to accomplish maturity in the lives of Christians after being steadfast and persistent in all that they go through in their lives unperturbed.

Remember that Noah took some 100 years or so working on building of the ark and many people must have ridiculed him for that together with his message also to them, that he was doing so as God was going to bring judgment by a great rain because of man’s wickedness and that the ark he was instructed to build was the only source of escape. Noah was not discouraged and gave deaf ear to whatever they said and persevered to the end and was saved together with his household. Many must have doubted Noah’s message from God and wondered if Noah probably was out of his mind.

Christians too need to persevere in life to reach perfection in the full measure and stature of Jesus Christ and be raptured that way at God's appointed time (Hebrews 11:7).

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja'-pheth.

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Make thee an ark of go'-pher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in

the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die.

But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

AND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteousness before me in this generation.

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.

Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

Genesis 6:9-7:1-6

It was not easy for Noah to do all that the Lord God instructed him to do but all the same he did it although it was quite an uphill task. God must have given him so much grace to be able to endure through it all, just as he gave later others such as Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7-9) and Job (Job 1).

At this time, the world is corrupt through and through and it seems like it has reached its climax with all sorts of scandals and not to be corrupt one is literally taken as

unfashionable by many, but it is okay to be called such if you are a Christian, as you need to be continually fashioned to Christ (Romans 12:1-2) and never be part of the corrupt world and continue to say a big no to corruption and be found righteous by your Master (Boss), that is, Jesus Christ just as God found Noah to be righteous in his generations and was saved.

Now Noah believed in what God told him and we need to do the same now as the words of God are final and we either believe it acting on it and be saved or doubt it and be destroyed/lost.

Jacob had to persevere wrestling with an angel of God until he received his blessing and not quitting quickly. We too must remain in Christ and forget any mentality of quitting, whatever comes our way and later (finally), be saved (raptured).

And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jab'-bok.

And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and has prevailed.

And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

Genesis 32:22-29

You must be left alone to go through hard times in perseverance as you can't share that with another just as Job was alone and even his closest friend (his wife) was not with him (Job 2:1-10). Jacob was determined in the wrestling and was not ready to call it quits. You and me

must remain put in Christ even when the world us see as ‘useless’ or ‘finished’ and write us off; because through it we are going to come out blessed indeed. We need wait until our names are changed from a Christian to a Victor and Winner as we have prevailed being triumphant and victorious in Christ Jesus and now not as a child of God but as a son of God now matured and ready to inherit God’s kingdom in heaven.

Even Elisha was determined to remain close and walk with Elijah before Elijah was taken away as he expected from Elijah and for sure he persevered throughout the journeys and received from Elijah.

AND it came to pass, when the LORD would take up E-li’-jah into heaven by a whirlwind, that E-li’-jah went with E-li’-sha from Gil’-gal.

And E-li’-jah said unto E-li’-sha, Tarry here, I pray thee: for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And E-li’-sha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el.

And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to E-li’-sha, and said unto him, knowest thou that the

LORD will take away thy master from thy head today?

And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

And E-li'-jah said unto him, E-li'-sha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho.

And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. so they came to Jericho.

And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to E-li'-sha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head today? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

And E-li'-jah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said,

As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

And E-li'-jah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that E-li'-jah said unto E-li'-sha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before

I be taken away from thee. And E-li'-sha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and E-li'-jah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

And E-li'-sha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

He took up also the mantle of E-li'-jah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

And he took the mantle of E-li'-jah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of E-li'-jah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and E-li'-sha went over.

And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of E-li'-jah doth rest

on E-li'-sha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

2 Kings 2:1-15

You can see that Elisha did not tire up but continued with Elijah in all the journeys as he had an agenda and focused and received a double portion from Elijah unlike some of us who get tired of continuing the Christian journey at some point and stop walking with the Lord and therefore will end missing out heaven.

We just have to be close to our Lord walking with him until he leads us into heaven and then we will have received our double portion. We now have the Holy Spirit and await to enter heaven then we will have received double from God (Romans 8:16-23). We must stay focused with one agenda - to be in heaven. That way, we will make it and not otherwise.

Let us not behave childishly when things get tough on us and say "if things are this way in salvation for me I quit". Quit to where? To the dark world and into hell!? no. If we say such in our mind or heart and decide to surely quit, we have behaved in a silly and foolish way indeed! Remember

that the children of Israel had to be taken by God through the wilderness before they were to reach and enter the promised land of Canaan.

Likewise, Christians must be ready to persevere in this life on earth before God establishes them and ushers them into heaven via rapture. As Joshua was advised by God, we need to take courage in God and we will overcome (Joshua 1:1-5) Read also Isaiah 41:8-20.

Something else, there is a Swahili saying which says “Mvumilivu hula mbivu” which in English can be translated as “The one that endures will eat what is ripe”.

Now to say the truth, the sweetness of salvation can only be fully realized when one is finally raptured into heaven to be with the Lord forever (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, Philippians 3:20-21, Matthew 10:22, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, 1 Peter 1:3-5, 1 John 3:1-2), Hence the need for a Christian to endure in salvation being ripened for the rapture which usher in a Christian into heaven.

We all know that for example, fruits are only best for consumption, that is, are sweet when they are fully ripe. The same is true with a Christian who need to mature up

and be ready (ripe) for the rapture of the holy Church of Christ.

The scripture too say that “The end of a thing is better than the beginning thereof.” (Ecclesiastes 7:8). Salvation too is only consummated in heaven (Revelation 14:13; 19:2-9; 21:1-7, 9-26; 22:12-14).

Chapter 7

In conclusion

In concluding in this chapter and in this book as a whole let us first read the following scriptures:

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof:
and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Ecclesiastes 7:8

If someone becomes a Christian it is a very good thing. But it is equally better for the Christian to end well completely, saved and has finally entered heaven. (Matthew 10:22, Philippians 3:20-21, 2 Peter 3:10-18, 1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

The big question one may ask is, if all these factors is required to be in a Christian and to grow and mature up, is it really possible? The answer to that question I believe has being answered in the scriptures.

And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets; and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried, about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:11-16

There it is. God has given to the Church of Christ through Jesus Christ ministers not only to edify the Church but to perfect it as well.

SIMON Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of our Jesus our Lord,

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Peter 1:1-4

And once again, there it is. God has by his divine power given to all Christians all things that are required to live a Christian life and as an incentive given them very great and precious promises to motivate them to be able to now take the divine nature through the same power in them by his Spirit.

So in those two instances, we find both the ministers of God to build and equip Christians as well as the Holy Spirit in them to make all the efforts possible to accomplish it's purpose.

Now turning back to individual responsibility of Christians, the factors/qualities we have gone through must be nurtured to growth, maturity, to fully maturity.

Each factor has its own unique importance in the Christian growth to maturity of a Christian each contributing to the wholeness/perfectness of a Christian to full maturity.

Those factors can be likened to rungs of a ladder or steps of a step-ladder of which the first rung or step serving as faith (the foundation) (2 Peter 1:5) and the next ones are the other factors which bring about together with the faith both growth, maturity and finally full maturity/perfection. As the rungs or steps increase by each rung or step (like in a standing ladder or a step-ladder), the height increases (there is growth), such that when about to reach the peak, maturity is obtained and reaching the peak, full maturity is realized. What apostle Paul wrote to the church in Philippi and referring to himself with his colleagues, he referred to Christian maturity in verse 15 and Christian full maturity in

verse 12 of chapter 3. Now when one does reach the peak, that is what the scripture call reaching perfection unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). Read also the same epistle in Ephesians 3:19.

In addition to the above, it seems that the level of anointing in a Christian's life has much contribution in the slowness or fastness of growth in a Christian.

The higher the level of anointing in a Christian the more likelihood of a fast growth in a Christian and vice versa. The higher the level of anointing the more the power. The highest level of anointing enables one's spirit to flow and swim in the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel47:1-5). In that level I do believe a Christian has all the requirements for accelerated growth to full maturity. It could be why Apostle Paul encouraged or advised the church at Ephesus that they be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-21).

To me it seems from the various scriptures we have gone through that faith is the initiator of the Christian Walk and love is the binder and perfecter of it all, as God is love. (Ephesians 2:8, Hebrews 11:6, Romans 5:1,2 Peter 1:5, 1 John 4:8, 16; 1 Corinthians 13:3, Romans 14:8-10, Matthew 22:34-40)

The bottom line is that all Christians must strive to mature up in their walk as there is nothing to lose in doing so. But there is everything to lose by not doing so.

The main focus of a Christian should be on Christ Jesus who also had all his focus on his Father who art in heaven and also on what lay ahead of him if he completed the task he was given (to lay down his life) so as to bring salvation to mankind. A Christian also need to have a main focus on his Master Jesus Christ and what awaits him/her if he/she remains focused and has strived to full maturity. Look at this scripture where we are told Jesus endured and remained focused.

WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Hebrews 12:1-4

The factors we had gone through, all of them combined bring about in a Christian a balanced/wholesome growth in a Christian which we can see in the life of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. A Christian's growth in spirituality need be wholesome resulting from the factors we have covered above.

Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, and she brought forth a son.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of showing unto Israel.

Luke 1:57, 80

A Christian has been born of the Spirit of God and need to grow in spirituality in one's walk with the Lord and be strong maturing fully such that when the day of rapture is at

hand the one is ready to meet the Lord and to be with him forever in heaven.

And **Jesus increased in wisdom, and stature,** and in favor with God and man.

Luke 2:52

The growth of Jesus was wholesome both spiritually and physically.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12-13

A Christian need to work out one's salvation in fear and trembling in earnest obedience regardless of whether is alone or with other brethren for one's own benefit God helping such a one through the Holy Spirit.

I take this opportunity to revert back to my lead scripture in the second epistle of Apostle Peter to the Church.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, **brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:** for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

For **so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

2 Peter 1:8-11

With all the factors of growth we had gone through a Christian has to make one's calling and election sure by working out one's salvation to full maturity and thereby being assured of entering heaven into everlasting life. It is by that only, that a Christian will always be fruitful in one's

walk in knowing the Lord. The factors need to abound (be plenty) in a Christian.

A mature Christian reflects in life selflessness and not selfishness or pettiness or carnality, all of which retards growth and maturity in Christ Jesus (Acts 20:17-27, 21:7-14, Mark 10:35-45, 1 Corinthians 3:1-7). Let me now take this opportunity to give you a comparative look of both the immature and the mature in Christ.

Signs of immaturity	Signs of maturity
1. Having an unforgiving heart by action (Colossians 3:13a, Romans 12:17-20)	Having a forgiving heart by action (Genesis 50:15-21, Colossians 3:13)
2. Easily compromise (Matthew 26:14-16; 28:11-15)	Showing full hatred of sin (Job 28:28, Romans 12:21)
3. Laziness in praying and fasting (Matthew 26:36-41)	Loving and busy in prayer and fasting (Acts 2:40-42; 4:23-31; 12:1-5, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 1:3:11, Colossian 4:2)

4. Slow in obeying God's word (1 Samuel 13:1-14; 15:1-23)	Quick in obeying God's word (Genesis 12:1-5; 22:1-3; 6:9-7:16, Joshua 4)
5. Has hatred for others and holding grudges (Hebrews 12:15, Romans 12:17)	Loves all people (Romans 12:13-16, Galatians 6:10, Exodus 32:1-14; 30-33)
6. Shallowness in the word of God (Hebrews 5:11-13, Hosea 4:6)	Full of the word of God (Matthew 4:1-11, Acts 26:24-29, Hebrews 5:14)
7. Has human perspective on issues in life (1 Samuel 16:6-7)	Has God's perspective on issues in life (1 Corinthians 2:12-16)
8. More critical of others than exhorting (3 John 9-11, Titus 3:9)	Points shortcomings and encourage/teach in holiness and righteousness (2 Timothy 2:14-15)
9. Easily angered and lacks self - control and is petty (1 Timothy 6:3-5, Galatians 6:19-20)	Slow to anger and humble and don't dwell on petty issues (Galatians 6:22-23, 2 Timothy 2:16-18, Titus 2:8;

	3:9)
10. Skipping Sunday services and avoiding Christian fellowships (Hebrews 19:25)	Regularity in Sunday services and active participation in Christian fellowships. (Acts 2:43-47)
11. Lacking patience and perseverance in persecution and hardships in life (2Timothy 4:9-10a)	Patience and perseverance in persecutions and in hard times in life (Colossians 1:24; 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:5-7)
12. Living a careless life generally and not focused and unconscious of time squandering it in not useful ventures (Ephesians 4:17-24, Galatians 6:7-8a)	Living a careful and conscious life and focused as well as living a time – conscious life redeeming time in useful work in God’s kingdom (Philippians 1:27-30; 3:12-16, Hebrews 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:15-20, Galatians 6:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:58)
13. Quick in conforming to	Scrutinizing new trends in

the changing world (embracing modernism) (2 Timothy 2:19-21)	life and not unduly influenced by them (Romans 12:2)
14. Liking to please people and get their approval and to be loved by them (Johns 5:43-44, Acts 12:1-3)	Loving to please God and not wanting to get approval of people but of God (Psalm 119:1-6; 97-104, Acts 4:13- 20)
15. Showing unprincipled life based on world values. (2 Timothy 2:22- 26; 4:3-4, Titus 3:9)	Showing a principled life based on the word of God. (Titus 2:7-15)

Please take time to sincerely gauge yourself to see if you are on the right side of the table. If you find you are not, be honest with yourself and strive very hard to see that you are on the right side of the table by making the necessary adjustments accordingly as soon as possible.

Notes to the reader

I take this opportunity to thank you for reading this second volume of ‘Steps to Christian Maturity’ and believe it has been of good use to you. In case you have any comments to make please do so using the address given below.

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